

My Lock-down Life – Aberdeen, Scotland – 15th June 2020

Lock-down in Scotland has been a rather pro-longed affair and continuing to be so. Lock-down started on 23rd March 2020 in Scotland, where restrictions have only begun to lift 3 weeks ago and are reviewed every 3 weeks. During lock-down we were not allowed to have any visits in our house or meet others outside. We could only leave the house for essentials, and exercise once a day. A time in society I certainly would not like to revisit! Zoom for quiz nights with my friends and family became the weekly thing to look forward to. It was all very strange and continues to be so.

Now, we are at least able to meet in groups of 8 outside or in gardens and places other than essential shops are beginning to re-open with plans for more restrictions lifted this week, although it still feels far from 'normal'. It's been so nice to be able to see my friends again and hopefully we are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel moving forward. In order to keep busy and positive I have been going out on lots of walks, runs, and getting into yoga. My home has also managed to simultaneously turn into my office and gym. I work for a public sector organisation in the UK National Health Service called NHS Education for Scotland. And we have been very busy during the pandemic re-deploying our trainee doctors to cover wards in Scotland's hospitals to cope with the COVID-19 patients.

Thinking back to more simpler times, I've been in Aberdeen for nearly 11 years after leaving Groningen in 2009. I arrived at ISG in 2004 from the UK at the age of 11 – perhaps some of you weren't even born then – that's a scary thought and I'm now feeling old! I completed IB in 2009. The friends I made at ISG have remained my life-long best friends. We all reminisce so fondly about our time and memories at ISG. Living in NL will always hold such a special place in my heart, and I will always continue to visit, sharing my memories with my future family and giving my children the opportunity to experience different cultures. My partner, who I met within 6 months of living in Aberdeen, has also loved all our trips to NL. Last year I came back to Groningen for the first time for a friend's wedding with my partner – the friend getting married was also a previous ISG student! We took the time to bike to the ISG and I saw the new building; it was very strange being back but also felt so familiar. I hope 2021 will allow me the chance to get back to NL and is also the year we hope to get married (having rearranged from May 2020!) – it will hopefully be a big reunion as many of my friends in NL are planning to attend.

Larissa Spindler, 29 x

